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ABSTRACT

The Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School was formed in response to the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, which established 25 charter schools that were fully public in both funding and access. Its goals are influenced by Theodore Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools. Initially, 120 students, 12 to 14 years old, attended. Five years later 350 students completed high school. This book offers a narrative of the beginning years of this semiautonomous charted secondary school, describing its vision of learning, day-to-day challenges, and achievements. It provides written insight into the strategic issues involved in launching a new school. The author's point of view is of part-time principal and part-time teacher in the school's early years and of his later years as a full-time classroom teacher. Part 1 explores themes particularly relevant to school leadership, from the perspective of part-time principal. Part 2 looks closely at issues of teaching and learning from the perspective of classroom teacher. Part 3 offers a meditation on lessons learned from the collected experiences of the school's early years. (RKJ)

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